

Monte Bernardi

Sowing the seed in 2003, Michael Schmelzer, who is American, moved to Italy with his family and purchased 10ha of organic vineyards, in the “belly button of Chianti Classico” at Monte Bernardi. When he planted in 2005 and began farming biodynamically, he did not yet know what it would entail or how difficult it would be. However, he did know that conventional vineyards tend to spray when it rains, to help prevent the grapes from rotting, and that these chemicals simply wash off of the vines and into the soil. Schmelzer decided that if he built healthy vine from the roots up then he would have healthy vineyard that were less affected by mold and pests.



The Monte Bernardi estate extends over 53 hectares (130 acres), of which 9.5 hectares (23.5 acres) are vineyards of an average age of over 40 years. The vineyards are situated in the hilly, southern most region of Panzano, an area that has been acknowledged as one of the Grand Cru of Chianti Classico, and is considered capable of making wines that can compete with the best in the world. The vines are planted on a soil of a high rock content mixture, which dependent on the vineyard consists of shale (Galestro), marl and limestone (Alberese). The vineyards are perfectly situated – standing at an altitude of 350 meters above sea level, surrounded by forests and enjoying a southern exposure, with the river Pesa flowing just a few hundred meters to the south. These factors contribute to the unique micro-climate of Monte Bernardi.

Sangio



Varietal/Blend: Sangiovese

Farming Practices: certified organic with biodynamic practices

Elevation: 400–550m

Soil: galestro (shale) and pietraforte (calcareous stone)

Vine Training: Guyot and cordon

Harvest Technique: by hand

Year Vines Were Planted: 1999–2010

Yeast: ambient

Malolactic: full

Sulfur: less than 25mg/L total SO₂

Vegan: yes

Alcohol: 13.5%

Fined: no

Filtered: yes

Country: Italy

Region: Tuscany

Subregion: Chianti Classico, Panzano

From the high hills of Panzano, above Dario, Michael Schmelzer had been visiting the owner of this vineyard since 2014 and trying to convince the owner to rent the vineyard to him. In 2018...the owner finally relented and offered to sell the plot to Schmelzer.